

Our Times In Prophecy, No. 8.

BY JOHN CULP.

The friendly disposition that is manifested at present between Romanism and Protestantism, next demands our consideration.

If it can be shown successfully that the attitude of these two great associations is of a friendly disposition towards each other at present, then according to previous dispositions made of the prophecies of our times, we may set it down that another of the prophetic periods have come to pass, and though we will think but little about it in our day, it will be, as well as all other like events have been, a marvelous topic to comment upon hereafter.

In the consideration of the sociability that should exist between the Roman and Protestant parties to show up a friendly relation between them, in order to fulfill the prophecy of causing "the earth (moral people) and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed it should not be expected for us to search for that sociability only in religion; but since Rome was a beast of the sea (political power) we expect first to find a unity and agreement in the present system of our government. Then let us see first what the attitude of the spirit of the Papacy is toward the spirit of our government.

To establish the friendly relation between these two great parties in a political respect, we will quote a paragraph from the pastoral letter of the Arch-bishops and Bishops of the United States, comprising the third Plenary Council of Baltimore, December 1884.

"We think we can claim to be acquainted both with the laws, institutions and spirit of the Catholic church, and with the institutions and spirit of our country, and we emphatically declare there is no antagonism with them. A Catholic finds himself at home in the United States, for the influence of his church has constantly been exercised in behalf of individual rights and popular beliefs, and a right-minded American no where finds himself more at home than in the Catholic church, for nowhere else can he breathe that atmosphere of divine truth which alone can make us free. We repudiate with equal earnestness the assertion that we need to lay aside any of our devotedness to our church to be true Americans; the insinuation that we need to lay aside any of our love for our country's principles and institutions to be a faithful Catholic, to argue that the Catholic church is hostile to our great republic because she teaches that "there is no power but from God;" because, therefore, back of the events which led to the foundation of the republic she sees the providence of God leading to that issue, and back of our country's laws the authority of God as their sanction. This is evidently so illogical and contradictory an accusation that we are astonished to hear it advanced by persons of ordinary intelligence, and we believe our country's heroes were the instruments of God to the nation in establishing the home of freedom. To both the Almighty and to his instruments in the work we look with grateful reverence, and to maintain the inheritance of freedom they have left us, should it ever be—which God forbid—be imperiled, our Catholic citizens will be found to stand forward as one man, ready to pledge anew "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor." No less illogical would be the notion that there is aught in the free spirit of our American institutions incompatible with perfect docility to the church of Christ."

This is a marvelous quotation when the authority is taken into consideration and studied in connection with prophecy. Read again from the same letter regarding their patriotism.

"We desire that the history of the United States, should be carefully taught in all of our Catholic schools, and have directed that it be especially dwelt on in the education of young ecclesiastical students in our preparatory seminaries. So, also, we desire that it form a favorite part of the home library and home reading. We must keep firm and solid the liberties of our country by keeping fresh the noble memories of the past, and thus send forth from our Catholic homes into the arena of the public life not partisans but patriots."

All this, according to our expositors, makes it obvious that a great prophetic period is now pre-

sent in our time, provided that these quotations are spoken in sincerity. To further establish their truthfulness and sincerity we quote from the world-wide informed editor of the *Missouri Republican* (St. Louis) who comments on the letter as follows.

"The pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops comprising the third plenary council is interesting as expressing the views of the representatives of a powerful religious body. It is directed to the Catholic clergy and laity and is in the nature of a public advisory address, touching upon various questions of general interest in terms characterized by such moderation and dignity that even among those not subject to Catholic influence it will be treated with respectful consideration. The declaration made that there is no antagonism between the laws and spirit of the Catholic church and the institutions and obligations of our American system and citizenship appears directed against a criticism that is more imaginary than real. * * * We have not heard the proposition that there is any antagonism between Catholicism and the principles of American citizenship supported by any recent authority. The pastoral letter goes into some length of argument to disprove it, which seems to give the matter more prominence than the country generally is disposed to attribute to it."

According to this quotation the unity and harmony of Catholicism and Protestantism has politically already been established; for in the instance of the Catholic party attempting to "disprove" charges of insubordination to certain principles and when they have never been interfered with in the exercise of their liberties, and the other party denies of ever having urged any such charges; makes it manifest that the parties are united.

But if the prophecy of the "deadly wound" is healed in Romanism and Protestantism regarding one another as co-workers both secularly and religiously, then we must look for that unity in the world generally, and so it also may be shown to be at present in other countries, as we notice in the following.

"Looking about us we see that not only are papists and protestants coming closer together to the support of the "mighty," but to the support of each other, feeling that they must all stand or fall together. We see too that Germany the once bitter foe of Papacy, has surrendered and granted it special rights and privileges in Germany, and honored it by submitting to the Pope state questions; and the Pope in turn has honored Bismark with membership in the so called "Order of Jesus." Though as the opponent of Papacy few ever earned more richly than he, the curses and anathemas of the Pope." *Zions Watch Tower March, 1886.*

Read again in the same paper. "While the Protestant (?) sects are coming daily into closer sympathy with the 'Mother church' as they rightly call the church of Rome, the governments are doing likewise. The latest proof of this is found in dispatches dated January 1, 1886, in which it is announced that the Prussian government which for several years past has been at enmity with the church of Rome, proscribing many of her priests and bishops, declaring that the influence of Papacy is contrary to the peace and prosperity of the empire, is now come into perfect harmony; and the Pope has decorated Prince Bismark with the 'Order of Jesus' the badge of which is richly set with diamonds. This present was accompanied by an autograph letter from the Pope, and in return emperor William of Prussia has decorated the Pope's chief secretary, Cardinal Jacobini, with the 'Order of the Black Eagle,' the most honorable decoration of the Prussians," *January 1886.*

It is wonderful when we contemplate how that prophecies have foretold and are now fulfilling in the human affairs of our times. From another view it is not at all surprising, for our change is being brought about as all previous changes have been, unnoticed by humanity because of being attended by the forces of reason.

The Roman Catholic church and Protestantism have the very best of reasons to be friendly disposed toward each other. They have in the last few years observed a rallying forth and a threatening unrest of other forces in our universe that demands those two great parties to haste into a united

position and talk smooth words about patriotism in their subjects "Ready to pledge anew their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor," for the "Land of the free and the home of the brave." The honorable and the mighty know very well the source of their godly and dainty livings. Let a hint be sufficient here.

Romanism and Protestantism according to views in these articles must mutually recognize each other, and so they are now; and have, even for years been recognizing each other in adhering to the same great sentiments both politically and religiously. But they have numbers among them according as it is represented in Rev. 17: 3, upon whom they are seated, or rather through whom they have their existence, whom it always has been the business of the good and honorable and mighty to subject unto themselves, but who are purely political, and who will in this case hate them and finally destroy them—Rev. 17: 16. This will be noticed more fully here after.

Our Creed.

The Brethren Church when first organized in "Prussia," in 1708, by natural agreement affirmed the *Doctrine and Principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, and covenanted together as a *Church of Christ*, to be governed by the gospel alone as their creed. In America, on the 25th day of December 1723, the church was reorganized at Germantown, Pa., and reaffirmed the same doctrine and principles of the gospel creed as understood by those who constituted the church at that time. The Brethren Church, as now existing, having and holding that the gospel alone, as an all sufficient law in religion and for the government of the church, should get as near to the teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostolic practice or precedence as possible.

This article is not intended to originate controversy, but to bring before the minds of the readers of our dear EVANGELIST, Gospel truth and apostolic practice. The evangelist, Matthew, informs us that when Christ was dipped, he came immediately up from the water; Luke adds, and praying the heaven was opened and the spirit of God (or Holy Spirit) descended in the bodily shape of a dove and abode upon him. From this language it is evident that our Redeemer was out of the water when he prayed and was anointed by the Holy Spirit. This seems to have been set forth in the ceremonial service. After the priests were washed, the Holy Garments for Glory and beauty were put upon them. Then they were anointed with oil and so consecrated to serve in their respective offices. When we follow on down to the apostolic age and practice, we find on the day of Pentecost that the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was to those who were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. In this connection there is nothing said in reference to consecration, but we follow on and in the 8th chapter of the Acts of the apostles we have a precedent laid down very conclusive, by Peter and John who were leading apostles among the twelve. It is said in this instance "that when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Sapphira had received the word of God they sent down Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." Acts 8: 14, 17 inclusive. Now in this precedent, the men and women that believed were dipped and were not in the water when consecrated or anointed by the Holy unction; and further, the Prayer preceded the laying on of hands. "They prayed that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." The apostolic order in the ordaining of officers as set forth in Acts of the apostles, 6: 6 agrees in regard to laying on hands after the prayer is concluded.

Now brethren let us follow our creed. If I am in error will some loving brother or sister please correct me, and if not in error will we all speak the same thing and walk by the same Gospel Rule. Let brotherly love continue.

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Blanco, Pa., Nov. 22, 1886.